



**NEWS RELEASE
MARCH 27, 2007**



**U.S. Attorney Gregory G. Lockhart Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann
Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission
U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General
Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney Mat Heck, Jr.
The Humane Society of the United States**

**“OPERATION BITE BACK” RESULTS IN FEDERAL DRUG, GUN, OTHER
CHARGES AGAINST NINE INVOLVED IN DOG-FIGHTING RING**

DAYTON – A federal grand jury here today indicted nine people in a 46-count indictment for their roles in the operation of a multi-state dog-fighting ring. The indictment comes after teams of federal, state and local law enforcement agents conducted a 14-month investigation which culminated Saturday night with a sting operation that brought the leaders of the operation to a warehouse in Moraine where they thought a dog fight was going to occur. At the same time, agents executed eight federal and state search warrants in Dayton, Cincinnati and Trotwood.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann; Don Meeks, Special Agent in Charge, Midwest Region, Chicago, U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General; Montgomery County Prosecuting Attorney Mat Heck, Jr., and Wayne Pacelle, President and CEO of the Humane Society of the United States announced the indictment. The investigation was conducted by a task force created and supported by the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, which is part of the Ohio Attorney General’s Office.

Agencies participating in the investigation and operation include:

The United States Department of Agriculture Office of the Inspector General (USDA OIG-I), The United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATFE), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Ohio Attorney General’s Office, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations, the Ohio Department of Public Safety, the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office, the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office, the Tactical Crime Suppression Unit, the Hamilton County Prosecutor’s Office, the Montgomery County Prosecutor’s Office, the Centerville Police Department, the Dayton Police Department, the Cincinnati Police Department, the Miamisburg Police Department, the Moraine Police Department, the Kettering Police Department, the German Township Police Department, the Perry Township Police Department, the Jackson Township Police Department, the New Lebanon Police Department, and the Trotwood Police Department.

“Dog fighting is not a sport; it’s cruelty,” Lockhart said. “The investigation uncovered evidence that the operation also served as a breeding ground for illegal drug and gun activity that reaches across state lines.”

“Those who engage in this barbaric bloodsport are not just dog fighters. They are people who perpetuate gambling, drug use, and violence” Dann said. “The fact that these fights play out in front of children is even more abhorrent. The ringleaders will be aggressively prosecuted, and spectators should be aware that no type of animal fighting will be tolerated in the state of Ohio.”

“The Humane Society of the United States commends this outstanding, coordinated operation as a step toward wiping out organized dog fighting in Southern Ohio,” said The Humane Society’s Pacelle. “Making use of strong federal and state prohibitions on such conduct, law enforcement agents have successfully dealt a major blow to this despicable industry.”

“Dog fighting is a well organized criminal enterprise that is often conducted with other criminal activity, such as drug trafficking, gambling, and illegal firearms” Heck said. “Not only is this conduct cruel to animals, but it also negatively impacts our communities.”

A list of defendants and the charges they face is attached, along with a copy of the indictment.

An indictment is merely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

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